(b) if so, the number of cases of refund pending with the Income Tax Department, Delhi as on 31st January, 2003; and

(c) by when all these refund cases are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The total number of refund cases pending with Income Tax Department, Delhi as on 31st January, 2003 was 1,02,125.

(c) All these refund cases are likely to be cleared by the Income Tax authorities by 28th February, 2003.

Exploration of oil and gas in Jwalamukhi basin in H.P.

*110. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of exploration of oil and natural gas in Jwalamukhi basin in Himachal Pradesh by ONGC;

(b) whether any headway has been made in finding oil and gas reserves in the basin; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) has been carrying out exploration activities in the form of seismic surveys and exploratory drilling in the State of Himachal Pradesh, in Himalayan Foothills Basin encompassing Jwalamukhi area. At present, ONGC is holding Petroleum Exploration Licence (PEL) in one block, namely, Kangra-Mandi Block. Acquisition of Two-Dimensional (2-D) seismic data and drilling of one exploratory well in the Jawalamukhi-Nadaun-Hamirpur area are the exploratory efforts.

(b) No commercial accumulation of hydrocarbons has so far been found in the State of Himachal Pradesh.

(c) Does not arise, in view of reply to part (b) above.